

THROUGH THE FIRE.

BY M. P. REYD.

"De place, sah! Dis is de judge's mansion, if you please, sah!"

The stable coachman opened the door of the carriage, and the young man who sat within stepped out and cast a glance around the lovely domain upon which he had entered.

"Ah, thank you, James. Is it James?" he asked, smiling as he slipped a quarter into the negro's hand. "I thought I heard them call you so at the station."

"Yes, sah, James, sah, dat's it. Tanky sah!" And the darkey pocketed the coin, with a broad grin. "Jes' walk right up de steps, sah! I doesn't expect as how de judge is to home at dis hour ob de day, sah. But Mis Clara is, an' de house-keeper, Mis' Bennett. Jes' walk right in, sah!"

"All right, James! I'll find some one."

The young gentleman sprang up the steps, and James, as he drove round to the stable, scratched his head and muttered in perplexed tones:

"Now, blame me! ef I knows wheder dat's right or not! I fougout I was goin' to bring home Mars Judge's scratchety, what eber that may be. Anyhow, it's de feller as does de writin' fer him. But dis hyar chap looks as much a gemman as de Judge himself, or eben Mis Clara, so I done treat him like one, an' tole 'im go to de front do'. Ef dey don't like it, dey kin jes' lump it! Whoa, dah, you Julius Caesar! Whoa, now, Pompey!"

And forgetting that not by any possibility could his young mistress, at least, become a gentleman, James put his petted horses away, while the young subject of his cogitations rang at the door of the stately mansion.

Mrs. Bennett was in the hall, and opened the door herself. She saw a tall, exceedingly handsome, well-dressed gentleman, a man of almost kingly presence, with fair, waving hair, and smiling blue eyes, and she at once fell into James' mistake, and supposed she was addressing a visitor to the house, not one who came in the capacity of a paid dependent.

"Is Judge Milton at home?" asked the gentleman.

"Not at present, sir," replied Mrs. Bennett. "But Mis Clara is. Walk into the parlor, please, and I will call her."

"Take her my card, if you please," said the stranger, handing the portly house-keeper a square, creamy bit of thick pasteboard.

She showed him into the elegant parlor, and on her way up stairs glanced at the card.

"Herman L. Hutton, Washington," was what she read there.

But the name told her nothing, nor did it enlighten Miss Clara, when she held it in her hand, looking at it with some curiosity.

"What kind of a looking person, Mrs. Bennett?" she asked.

"One of the finest looking gentlemen I ever saw," said Mrs. Bennett. "He must be some distinguished person, I think."

"One of papa's friends, I suppose."

Miss Clara rose, gave one glance at the mirror to see that her beautiful black hair was in proper order, shook out the folds of her garnet silk morning robe, and went down to the parlor.

The stranger rose as she entered, and at the first glance of those sunny blue eyes a feeling shot through Clara Milton's heart such as she had never before known—a sensation which came to stay.

"I presume you are a friend of my father's?" she said, when the first greetings were over, speaking in a very genial tone.

"I can hardly claim that honor," said Mr. Hutton. "I have, however, the pleasure of being engaged as his private secretary. I come by appointment with him, to undertake the duties of that position."

"Oh, indeed!"

The proud daughter of Judge Milton did try to keep her sudden disappointment from showing itself in her voice and manner.

But Herman Hutton felt the chill, and guessed the cause, instantly perceiving her mistake.

"In that case," said Miss Milton, "your room has been prepared for some days, but I did not know my father expected you this morning. I suppose you will wish to retire to your chamber after your journey." And she rose and touched the bell.

A colored servant appeared. Miss Milton desired him to show Mr. Hutton to the room adjoining the library, on the second floor, and hold himself at his further orders.

As she was about to retire, she turned and said to the young secretary:—"You will join us at dinner. My father will be here then, and he will inform you as to your duties."

She bowed and withdrew, as if paid secretaries were no more to her than the dust under her dainty feet.

Herman smiled as he followed the waiter up the broad stairs.

"She defined my position very speedily, when she found out who I was!" he thought. "Ah, well, Miss Clara Vere De Vere Milton, you need not be afraid! I shall not presume upon your courtesy."

Yet he could not help a sigh mingling with the smile. He knew that though poor, he came of blood as blue and pure as her own. He felt that he

had within him those talents which would yet aid him to achieve a high place in the world's work.

And, meantime, he was young, and youth is sweet, and should be filled with pleasure. The strange sensation which struck to Clara's heart had at the same time smitten him. From the first glance into her beautiful, dark face, he knew that she was fated to love her—and that she was too far above him to make that love anything but hopeless.

However, it was duty he came here for. The love should be crushed—and the duty done, to the best of his ability.

His room was neat and pleasant. Not so grand as would have been the fine chamber offered to the distinguished guest they at first supposed him to be. But quite good enough for comfort, with a lovely view from his windows, and opening directly into the library, where most of his work would be done. He felt that he could be very happy here—if there were no dark, melting eyes to come between him and the pages he wrote.

He was sure of it, when he met the judge at dinner. Judge Milton was one of nature's noblemen. He knew no distinctions, but met his secretary just as if he had been of as high rank as himself. He was at once instructed as to his duties, and entered upon them.

By the Judge's desire he took his place as one of the family, even appearing, if he chose to do so, when there was company.

Miss Clara made an objection to this one morning. But her father promptly answered:

"Nonsense, my dear! The man is as much of a gentleman as any of us. Let him stay with us, when he is not on duty."

"As you please, of course, papa," answered Miss Clara. "Only, I didn't know it was customary in Virginia to receive your hired dependents as your equals in society."

"It is, when they are worthy of such distinction. At least, it shall be in this house," growled the old judge, as he went off to his office.

But neither of them knew that Herman Hutton, seated on the veranda outside the hall, heard every word.

Nor did even Herman guess what Clara knew well—that she feared and dreaded to have him in her presence because she could not help loving him. He was keenly aware of his role but he knew that her pride would keep her from owning it, even if she returned his love. As he sometimes believed that she did.

It is very hard for two young hearts to be dear to each other and not show it, if they are in the constant associations of the same house.

Herman had seen Clara's cheek color and her hand flutter when he had spoken to her unawares—she had even at times, treated him with a gentle friendliness which nearly set him mad with joy. But the next instant she would be cold as ice again, and he knew that in the struggle between her love and her pride, pride would be likely to conquer.

"But I will win her yet!" he said to himself. "Not now, but when I have won a place among lawyers and judges, made for myself a name and fame and wealth, then she shall own me for her peer, and if she is still free, she shall be mine!"

The first year of his secretaryship ended in this manner. While fulfilling all his duties rigidly, he diligently spent his spare time in reading law. And it was his plan soon to resign his position, establish himself for a year or two as student in a good law school, and then present himself as a candidate for admission to the regular bar. Steps by which he hoped to climb nearer to his beloved Clara, and lay the foundation for his own future greatness.

But as yet he had not spoken even to the judge of his plans and hopes.

One night it chanced that Judge Milton was away from home on business. Clara, Mr. Hutton, the housekeeper and servants were all there, when, in the dead hours of the night, the terrible cry "Fire!" was raised, bringing utter consternation in its train. The house was in flames, which had caught, no one knew how, from one of the flues, and made rapid headway before it was discovered.

Then there was hasty springing from beds, and rushing, half dressed, into the open air, while the livid tongues of fire, unscared by the screams and cries of maids and men, darted from every door and window, licking greedily over all that they could devour, sparing nothing.

Herman sprang up to find his room one red glare, and with but a few moments to save himself. Hastily throwing on what clothing he could, he rushed down and joined the frightened group below.

"Where is Miss Clara?" he demanded of the first one he met. "Who has seen your mistress? Is she safe?"

"Oh, no, no! No one has seen her!" wailed the housekeeper, wringing her hands in distress. "Oh, Mr. Hutton, for the love of God save her! Or how shall we answer her father, when he comes home and asks her of us? She is yet in the building! Oh, do save her!"

But Herman had not waited to hear half her words. Hastily speaking to one of the men who was carrying water, in a vain hope of quenching the resistless flames, he said:

"Here, dash that over me!"

The man obeyed and back ran Herman through thick smoke, and leaping flame, into the doomed house! Up the stairs, onward to Clara's room he flew, in desperate hope to be in time. As he reached her door, a wild scream came from within. She had but just awakened, and seen the danger around her, with no way of escape.

As he dashed open the door she sprang from her bed and ran toward him, crying:

"Oh, Herman, Herman! Save me. Save me!"

"I will, by God's help!" was his fervent answer, snatching a blanket from the bed. "Here, wrap this around you! Now trust to me and don't struggle; you will only hinder me!"

He caught her up in his strong embrace, and back, back he went over the fiery gulph and down the trembling staircase, bearing his precious burden, blinded by smoke, blistered, yet bravely fighting his way. She lay perfectly still in his arms; he reached the front door—a mighty cheer went up from those outside—and then Herman knew no more.

When he found his senses again he was lying upon the grass at a distance from the burning building, his head supported in Clara's lap, while her tears were falling over him. With love ineffable in his eyes, he looked up to her and murmured:

"You are safe! Then I can die content."

"No, no!" she sobbed, bending down to him. "You must live! Live for me, Herman! Live for me!"

"And with you, Clara?" their eyes met.

"Yes, forever!" was her answer, through deep blushes.

"Bless you!" whispered Herman, forgetting his burned and bleeding hands, his perils, and exhausted frame for a moment. "Oh, Clara! have I won you at last?"

"Yes! through the fire!" she murmured.

And Herman knew that love had conquered instead of pride, and though he had still to fight his way to fame, his reward was already waiting for him.

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Obliging.

People traveling in localities where it is impossible to have the hotel or household conveniences that can be had in cities, should adapt themselves to the restrictions which the conditions enforce with the best grace possible. To do otherwise is to sometimes expose one's self to the ridicule of those who are more easily satisfied, or who have more good sense. A fastidious young man from New York was traveling in the Rocky mountains. At night-fall the coach drew up before a one-story cabin with the word "Hotel" on a pine slab over the low door. The young man was the first passenger to alight, and he was in a hurry, for he evidently meant to secure the best accommodations the house afforded. "Where's the portah?" he asked of a stout round-looking man who came out of the cabin with his pipe in his mouth.

"Where's the what?" asked the man. "The portah."

"Portah to which?"

"To the house; to the hotel, of course."

"Oh, yaas; well, I'm he."

"Well, just get my baggage to my room at once. Is the landlady in?" he asked.

"Oh, yaas; I'm he."

"What—you? Well!"—sarcastically—"perhaps you're the clerk, too?"

"Yaas, stranger—I'm the clerk!"—and he winked roguishly at the amused passenger, "and the bell-boy, and the chambermaid, and dinin'-room gal, and all the rest throwed in."

"In that case," the city man drew himself up, feeling that he had been made fun of—"in that case let me have your best room, with plenty of towels and hot watah and an open fire."

"Humph! yaas. Yaas. That's so. You can have it, stranger. They's just two rooms in the whole shebang, and you kin hev the free run of 'em both if one of them is the kitchen. An' I reckon if you fly around lively, and git the fast use of the washpain, you'll git more good of the towel nor if you waited till the rest of the folks was done with it. Mebbe you kin wait till mornin'."

"We change the towel ev'ry Saturday, and this is Friday."

"Why, sir; I—I—weakly—"

"All right, all right, sonny. Run right 'long in, and make yourself to home. You kin hev the middle bunk on the right hand wall, and kin call it a 'bawdor' or a 'sweet' or a drawin'-room or anything you please. You kin take your meals in it, if you want to, and kin take 'em layin' down. They ain't room to 'set up, and there was a merry twinkle in the landlord's eye."

"Oh, I tell you, we know what good hotel-keepin' is if we do live in the wilderness; you kin hev anything you like here, sonny—anything you like."

"Sonny!" entered the house, but he didn't look happy.

A mathematical correspondent writes:

"I am going 4 2 see my inloded. I shall not have 2 6 long for an answer. I suppose you wish me 6 a."

A man breathes twenty times a minute, except when he is about to put the important question to his best girl. Then he breathes twenty times a second.

Brave little three-year-old boy of James Robinson, Newark, O., having fallen into a well 20 feet deep with six feet of water in it, clung to the stone wall till his mother found him and fished him out. He will be heard from some day.



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DITCH NOTICE.

To all Lot and Land Owners, and Municipal and Private Corporations, that will be affected by the Ditch Improvement Herein Designated.

Notice to land owners, et al.

In the matter of County Ditch No. 504, Petitioned for by J. M. Boulton, et al.

To G. P. Hinesdale, James Gamble, et al.

You and each of you are hereby notified that on the 30 day of June, 1885, J. M. Boulton filed a petition with the Auditor of Henry county, Ohio, the substance and prayer of which said petition is that there exists a necessity for the location and construction of a ditch on the following route and termini to-wit:

Commencing about 20 feet south of the south-west corner of the south east quarter of section 10, town 4, north range 8 east, Henry county, Ohio, running thence due north on the half section line through the center of sections 10 and 3 to the road improvement ditch on the township line between Richland and Darke counties, thence north along the west side of a county road through section 34, Darke, via township line, following Henry county ditch No. 213, until a sufficient outlet is obtained and there to terminate.

That said petition is now pending and that such proceedings have been duly and legally had and that the Board of Commissioners have found that said improvement is necessary for and will be conducive to the public health, convenience and welfare, and that the line therefor is on the best route, and that the duly appointed Engineer Henry Kolbe, has filed in this office his report as required by law, and that as such Auditor of said county the undersigned has fixed the 28th day of August, A. D. 1886, at 10 o'clock, at the Auditor's office in Napoleon, Ohio, for the hearing of said matter and proceeding. The following statement was made to you by the Engineer in his report, viz:

OWNERS NAMES.	DESCRIPTION.	Estimated cost of Construction.	Estimated cost of Location.
9) Sigel, Peter	4 8/21 a hf se-30	\$ 3 00	\$ 42
10) Boess, Herman	21 a end a hf se	3 00	16
11) Hanson, Catharine	22 a w se	8 00	43
12) Boess, M (State of Ohio)	23 a w se	8 00	43
13) Hinesdale, G. P.	24 a w se	6 00	39
14) Henry, Isaac S.	25 a hf w	32 00	1 71
15) Dinever, Michael	26 a hf w	20 00	1 07
16) Mullaly & Son (State of Ohio)	27 a hf w	3 00	16
17) Hinesdale, Kerr	28 a w q	120 00	6 42
18) Hinesdale, James	29 a hf w	930 00	48 14
19) Busk, David B.	30 a w se	38 00	1 60
20) Reed, Almira	31 a w se	60 00	3 21
21) Scott, Ann W.	32 a hf w	165 00	8 56
22) Paris, L. E (State of Ohio)	33 a hf w	165 00	8 56
23) Erwin, H. A.	34 a hf w	100 00	5 28
24) Wilcox, Jas.	35 a w se	20 00	1 07
25) Jacobson, Olof	36 a hf w	20 00	1 07
26) Jennings, John S.	37 a hf w	24 00	1 26
27) Moore & Hickocks	38 a hf w	24 00	1 26
28) Damer, Jos. M.	39 a w se	30 00	1 60
29) Towson, Susan	40 a hf w	10 00	53
30) Paulus, Samuel	41 a w se	12 00	64
31) Henry County	county roads	15 75	62

CHAS. EVERS, Auditor.

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